



P. O. Box 300900 ♦ Montgomery, AL 36130
(334) 242-3184 ♦ www.preserveala.org

Contact: Lee Anne Wofford 334-230-2659
lawofford@preserveala.org

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Florence City Cemetery added to Alabama Historic Cemetery Register

The Alabama Historical Commission (AHC) recently added Florence City Cemetery to the Alabama Historic Cemetery Register.

“The cemetery register is a prestigious listing of historic cemeteries in Alabama,” said Lee Anne Wofford, cemetery program coordinator. “The AHC considers the notable historic cemeteries in this register to be particularly worthy of preservation and appreciation, and therefore deserving of this special recognition.”

This is the first cemetery in Lauderdale County listed in the Alabama Historic Cemetery Register, which features 268 cemeteries statewide.

Mr. Billy Warren of Florence completed all of the state requirements to nominate this cemetery to the historic cemetery register. Mr. Warren provided maps, photographs, and historical information for the cemetery.

The Florence City Cemetery is the oldest cemetery inside the city limits of Florence and contains the graves of many of Florence’s most prominent and important families from the 19th and 20th centuries, including Florence’s first mayor, Alexander Hamilton Wood, and two Alabama governors, father and son Edward Asbury O’Neal and Emmett O’Neal. The oldest known grave is that of John Baptiste Sannoner, brother of Italian surveyor of Florence and Cypress Land Company member Ferdinand Sannoner. The cemetery also contains the gravesite of many war veterans, including at least one Revolutionary War veteran.

The Alabama Historical Commission administers the Alabama Historic Cemetery Program that assists the general public, government officials, civic groups, and others in identifying, documenting, registering, and conserving Alabama’s historic cemeteries.

The Alabama Historic Cemetery Register officially recognizes and honors family and community cemeteries that were established at least 40 years ago.

Listing in the state cemetery register is an honorary designation imposing no restrictions on property owners. State law protects all cemeteries from willful desecration and destruction.

The mission of the **Alabama Historical Commission** is to protect, preserve, and interpret Alabama's historic places. It is the state's historic preservation agency and serves as the State Historic Preservation Office.

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